

THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN

OUT AND AT HOME.

"A Woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.—Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her."—Prov. xxxi.



THE TWO WAYS—WHICH WAY SHALL I GO?

SUNDAY morning: blue sky, bright sunshine, warm air inviting to green fields and shady lanes. The feet of many people are passing over the glowing white pavement to keep holiday, or holy day, as the case may be. And, punctual as clock-work, Martha Careful is to be seen on her way to the sanctuary. She is neatly dressed, and carries her Psalm-book in her hand. Martha is only a maid of all work—*modest* of all work, somebody has said of her, on account of her industrious habits; for Martha is never idle.

On her way to the House of Prayer, Martha is met by Sarah Dawdle, or “Sally,” as she is usually called, also a domestic servant, given to smart ribbons, and shoes down at heel, to cheap jewellery, and an ill-washed face, to be always in a muddle and invariably behind time.

“Helloo!” is the greeting which Sally Dawdle accords to Martha, “where are you off to?”

“To a place of worship,” Martha answers, pleasantly enough; and it is not everybody who would look pleasant, if haloed about by a scare-crow. “I wish you were ready to go with me.”

“Yes, that would be a joke,” is Sally’s response. “Why I shan’t clean myself till tea-time. You can have nothing to do [Sally is given to the multiplication of negatives], or you could not do it, no more nor less.”

“It only requires a little method,” is the answer; “a place for everything, and everything in its place; a time for everything, and everything at the right time.”

“Well, every one to their likings,” says Sally. “If I could go out, like you, I would be off into the country. You would not catch me stiving myself in a church on such a day as this.”

Passing by at that moment is Caroline Smart, looking as gay as a coloured print in a fashion book. She is engaged all the week at a mattole maker’s, and on Sundays she goes out with the young men who, to employ her own expression, is “after her,” and with whom on the present occasion she is about to make a rural excursion. Miss Smart in passing, hears distinctly the opinion expressed by Sally Dawdle, and as it happens to be her own, she hoots to hear the answer.

“I am sorry to hear you say so,” is Martha’s reply; “we have but fifty-two Sabbaths in the year, and I could not afford to lose one of them.”

“But you don’t call pleasure a loss?”

“No; but the pleasures to which you refer I should call by another name. As I should not like to be made wretched on Sundays myself, I think it would be unfair to others to make others work for my amusement; and by going to ‘pleasuring,’ as things are now, I should compel others to labour, and help to rob them of their Sabbath rest.”

Sally stood with her mouth a little open—it was her usual expression of surprise—and said,

“Well, I never.”

“Another thing,” said Martha, “which I should take into account would be, whether a hard day’s pleasure was not of the two more tiring than a hard day’s work; you told me yourself, that the day after your monthly holiday you always felt more tired than at any other time; and as the Sabbath was given us for rest, we lose its real value when we weary ourselves with pleasure—if we are not fresher on Monday, we have generally mis-spent Sunday.”

Sally fell back upon her previous remark, and said,

“Well, I never.”

“But chily,” said Martha. “I object to pleasureings on Sundays, because we are breaking God’s commandment, and wilfully throwing away the opportunity which he has given us of hearing His Word, and worshipping with his people; and that, to me, is the best of ‘pleasuring.’”

“You are so particular.”

“God is more so: His command is full and plain. Depend upon it, a peaceful conscience and a prosperous week follow those who remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. But there, I must go; do try to come with me next Sunday.”

The two girls separated; Sally looked after Martha, and wiped her face with her apron, which had been clean *three weeks before*. Miss Smart goes on her way; but the lively prattle of her young man, the ride through the green lanes, the boisterous merriment of the tea garden, fail to rouse her from serious thought. She feels that she is wasting her health, her time, her money—that she is sinning against God; and she resolves to do better. The simple arguments of the poor girl have aroused her.

To the enquiry of her young man, “Where shall we go next Sunday?” “I shall go,” she answers, “to a place of worship.” And she went, and he followed. Were they the worst for it? They strolled after service for awhile together; and as they spoke of what they had heard, they missed—ah, how agreeably, the loud laugh and the coarse jest—they began to experience a new kind of happiness from a pure and holy source. And—under God’s blessing, it was Martha’s words that had wrought this change. She knew nothing of it—but it is written:

“A WORD SPOKEN IN SEASON, HOW GOOD IS IT!”

The British Workwoman, OUT AND AT HOME.

—“A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.—Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her.”—Prov. xxxi.

OUR Appearance demands a satisfactory introduction, and as we solicit only the leisure of the *busy*, our words of explanation must be few. While it is true that we have a large number of well-conducted and instructive journals, calculated to promote the social and moral elevation of the industrial classes, it is equally true, we have no organ exclusively devoted to the interests of the British Workwoman, and it will be our earnest effort to supply this want. In entering on our labours, we tread untrodden ground.

Woman is the very centre of all social influence. This influence is more or less salutary in proportion to her qualifications, and that of the degree of estimation in which she is held. This is universally admitted. But that which should be the practical result of such an admission, has never yet been attained—that is, the appropriate training of women for the solemn duties which belong to her position. Here we have a grand system of education quite apart from the influence of the State, but fully within the influence of every Home—the Education of Woman. In advertising to the subject of Ragged-School teaching, Earl Shaftesbury has said, “I BELIEVE THAT ANY IMPROVEMENT WHICH COULD BE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THE MOTHERS, WOULD EFFECT A GREATER AMOUNT OF GOOD THAN ANYTHING THAT HAS YET BEEN DONE.” And here lies the key to success in every great effort for the religious, moral, and social progress of our country.

The Education of Women, constitutionally, as well as intellectually, is really of more importance than the education of men.—*Since that of the latter is always Woman’s work.* Fully recognizing this fact, and deeply sensible of the lesson which it teaches, we propose to devote our pages to the furtherance of this grand object: by the exposition of Bible truths, by sketch and essay, anecdote and biography, fact and fiction, prose and poetry, to arouse, and we hope sustain, in the minds and hearts of British Workwomen, a sense of the responsibility which rests upon them. Without arrogating to ourselves the office of patron or teacher, we shall be well content to earn the name of Friend; and we hope to make very plain how honourable is virtuous industry, and how much of true happiness may be secured in a very humble condition of life. To this end we shall point out how closely identified are the interests of the employer and the employed; how many

jealousies and misapprehensions might be avoided by a better understanding on both sides; we shall dwell upon the importance of training in girlhood for the responsibilities of womanhood; and thus, while we urge upon wives and mothers the necessity of ever striving to make home the happiest spot on earth, we shall remind daughters that they can never become *women*, in the highest and truest sense, unless they acquire in youth the utilities of homely life. In these efforts we shall avail ourselves of every kind of information, from whatever source it be supplied, always in subjection to the teaching of that “sure word of testimony,” which, rightly received, fills the home with music, and the heart with love.

WHO ARE WORKWOMEN?

HAPPILY we live in days of common sense, when it is not the fashion to be ashamed of work. We have been taught, or rather—for the lesson is not yet completely learnt—we are being taught the dignity of labour. We cannot, now-a-days, feel contempt for persons whose efforts of brain or of hand are well-directed, well-sustained, and successful; but we do, all of us, heartily despise the curmuber in life’s busy garden—the useless, indolent drone in the world’s hive. And, therefore, we do not fear that the reader of this paper, be the hand that holds it fair and jewelled, or hard and plain and browned, will turn away from the lofty, honourable title of “British Workwoman.”

Who are Workwomen? First, and we are proud of having such a truly noble woman at the head of the sisterhood—we must mention our beloved and sovereign lady, the Queen. In the best, and every sense, she is a true-hearted Workwoman. Her hands, her brain, and most of all, her loving woman’s heart are all at work. With the cares of a great nation upon her, who, that knows anything of her private life, will not reverently own that she has done wisely and well her work as a wife and a mother? When the blow fell upon her which rebounded upon many thousands of hearts, the nation’s sympathy would not have been so ready and so deep, but for the knowledge that her grief was that of a good home-loving woman, who had earned the esteem of all her subjects by the upright and conscientious discharge of her duties.

And scarcely below Her Majesty in the respect which is due to their honoured names, are some women of whom England may well be proud. Such are Miss Nightingale, the brave and tender nurse of the sick and dying—whom the war cry, the cannon’s roar, the groans of the wounded, could not deter from her mission of mercy—who, far from friends and kindred, weary and disengaged oft, had ever a cool and skilful hand for the aching brow, a heaven-directed word for the despairing heart. Miss Marsh and Mrs. Wrightman, who shrink not from the poor man’s touch, who take the purity of their presence into the midst of the group of soul-stained navvies, speaking in clear voices of things pertaining to their temporal and spiritual welfare, urging them to temperate, honest, manly habits, never forgetting the best of all themes, the love of Jesus. And the energetic Mrs. Chisholm and Miss Rye, who have rescued many a fainting spirit, sending it to a new home amid brighter prospects and fairer hopes. These are, indeed, Workwomen in the best and truest sense.

And among the foremost of England’s Working Women is Miss Burdett Coutts. Her honoured name will long be a praise on the earth. Her magnificent fortune, so far from inducing a luxurious indolence, seems to be esteemed a loan from God, to be industriously and conscientiously laid out in His service. Her noble

efforts for poor mariners deserve to be recorded in letters of gold. The life-boat which she has generously presented to them, is a lasting memorial of her woman's pity. How many struggling men may it rescue from a watery grave? Into how many stricken faces may it bring the warm blood again? How many wives may receive their husbands—almost as it were from the dead, through its instrumentality? In the dark shadow which has so long overspread Lancashire, Miss Burdett Coutts was a ray of sunshine. Her energetic nature could not be satisfied with merely giving; she sent to see for herself the extent of the need, and to enquire into the most successful modes of alleviating it.

There were not many working women who could do all that this noble lady did for the suffering operatives, but there were many who won the approving testimonial—"She hath done what she could." Many who stinted themselves of the little superfluities so pleasant to the female eye—who did without dresses, jewellery, and even sea-side trips, in order to send the money which was literally the *life* of the uncomplaining weaver. And, if we look nearer, at the scene of suffering itself, how hard had some of the ladies there to work, who gave with their own fair hands—Dorcas-like—clothes to cover and warm the naked.

There is one Working Woman whose name, though not a British one, is familiar and dear to us—the "Swedish Nightingale," formerly Jenny Lind, now Madame Goldschmidt. It is pleasant to find the wonderful voice with which she is endowed used for such good purposes. Her concerts recently given in London for the "Hospital for Incurables," the "Brompton Hospital," "Distressed Needwives," "Infirm Musicians," &c., &c., prove that she, like so many of her sisters, has a heart yearning to do good in the aggregate; and many anecdotes constantly published of her tend to assure us of her kindness to individuals.

And there are hundreds of others doing a good moral work, whose names are not so well known to us. Ladies, with hands skilled to paint pictures, to gaze on which is to be elevated and instructed. Others there are whose pens are employed in our service, whose clever stories and refined thoughts help to train us for better things, and will not let us be crushed by the cares of the world, and remain "of the earth earthly." Yet others, who use the bright faces and sweet voices God has endowed them with, in the good cause, winning to sunshine and love those whose lives were dark and sin-en-crusted, teaching the little child in the Sunday school, reading holy words to the cottager, praying beside the sick-bed, cheering the lonely and helping the distressed. All this, and much more which is good and Christ-like work, is cheerfully and skilfully done by our sisters—and we need only remind them who have said "They shall in no wise lose their reward."

There are other Workwomen, fully deserving equal honour, to whom it is not always accorded. We speak of those who are compelled to work in order to live. There are some noble-minded women—*ladies* with whom this is the case, who, rather than be dependent, strive perseveringly to provide for their own wants, and often those of their friends. Their feelings and tastes are as refined, their aspirations as fervent, as those who have no such need falling upon them; but despising their own weakness they arise and labour. All honour to them! They may be only governesses, or shop-women, or dress-makers, or machine workers; their lives may be full of care and anxiety, and great weariness may attend them; but living their uncomplaining lives, doing all the good they can in their leisure moments, they are a blessing to the world, and God will assuredly bless them.

And there are yet others whose lives are even more busy. Mothers, with a round circle of little ones, looking up to them with all their wants; wives whose love has to be tested by their willingness to cook their husband's dinners, and keep their houses fair and clean, with their own honest hands. For these workwomen, rising early and toiling late, many feel compassion, but we know theirs are strong hearts and true, who would fling back pity if it were offered them, for they are happy and blithe as princesses. Why? Because a life of diligence is the only blessed one. Why? Because the woman's tender heart needs only *love* to feed it, and they have earned that reward.

Who are Workwomen? All who are true women. All who are not wasting their precious lives. All who have tender earnest spirits. All—whatever their age or station, who have learnt how much more blessed it is to give than to receive. There is a *necessity* to work, if not for themselves, for others; if not for others, for God.

For better days are coming, Progress is marching onward, bringing light and love and joy in its train. And in the days it ushers in, will be higher appreciation of woman's power, greater reverence for her work, more implicit confidence in the judgment which the heart ever directs. And in those days we pray that God and man alike, will bless the "British Workwoman."

A REASON WHY.

REALLY, mother, it is of no use you trying any longer. It is money wasted, time wasted, and heart-breaking. Do give it up."

These words were spoken by a young lady in affluent circumstances. She referred to her mother's labours among the outcast poor in the neighbourhood.

"Not *altogether* useless, my dear," was the reply; yet it was uttered in a tone which indicated a small degree of misgiving.

"Perhaps not *altogether*, mother; but I know not why you should continue to work, wasting away your little remaining strength while those who began with you have long since given up such fruitless and thankless efforts."

"That is just the reason why I ought to continue," added the mother, in a more decided tone. "It would never do all to give up in despair; and, besides, now but God know the result of our efforts, He knows the indirect as well as the direct results."

"Talk of results! mother, you know what they are—hypocrisy and lies—Catherine W——, for instance," rejoined the daughter, triumphantly, putting on a smile to cover something like displeasure, caused by her not succeeding in obtaining her mother's promise to resign her labours of love,

"Be more charitable, my dear. I know it is your love towards me which induces you to urge me to be more careful of myself; but God never meant that we should idle away our time, especially when there is so much need for work. As I have often said our duty is to work, and pray for the blessing."

"I know, mother, that is all well in theory. Most beautiful in words, but see how the practice operates upon you; and, the results are still unsatisfactory. You are aware that three ladies tried and failed to improve Catherine W——'s condition, and three times she has been false to you. I remember the two pleas you put in for the first and second 'mistakes' as you called them, but even *your charity* cannot suggest a third plea for the third offence, can it?"

"Be charitable, my dear—I beg of you be charitable. You harp upon Catherine W——'s ease. Well, let us look at it. Poor woman! If you but knew the half of what I lately learned you would not blame her so. In one sense her case is a special one, and yet, alas! there are many such. The wrongs which this class of women endure are beyond description." Here a forbidden tear rolled down the dear old lady's furrowed cheeks. This tear moved the heart of her daughter, and awaked in her an increasing curiosity, which suggested these words—

"Forgive me, mother, I have no wish to wound your feelings, but you are hurting yourself every day. Many of these poor women are in a sad condition, but do they not bring their sufferings upon

themselves? Did you not smell strong drink upon Catherine W——? and did she not say to you that she would, and did, abstain from it, because she had suffered so much by it? How can you expect to improve the condition of a sly tippler, who, to hide her hypocrisy, adds falsehood to her other sins?"

"Be charitable, my dear. Let me assure you that these twenty years experience as a visitor has proved to me that with the poor as with the rich, "things are not always what they seem." You press Catherine W——'s case. Well, take it. You do her an injustice when you say she has been three times false to me. It only appeared so. This last mishap has been cleared up, not by herself, but by her eldest daughter, and confirmed by her youngest boy. The truth is there was drink about her, but it was *without* *not within*. Her husband, for once since he became a confirmed drunkard, extended his generosity beyond the bars of the beer-house and gin-palace. Strangely enough, and for reasons best known to himself, he brought home some beer and spirits, and offered them to Catherine. She refused to partake of either, saying the children were hungry and wanted food; cold, and wanted fire. This roused him, and, in a fit of passion, he dashed the drinks over her and beat her severely. It was on the day following I visited her, and was led to fear she had *at last* given way because of the strong and disgusting smell which I experienced when speaking to her. On the same night this poor but noble woman washed out her tattered and strong-drink bespattered gown, in a pail borrowed for the purpose."

"Well, mother, that is the best plot I have heard; but could she not have told you at once?"

"Some would have done so, but it is not her way. She would rather suffer than enter into an explanation that would implicate her husband. Monster though he be, she never accused him to me, and seldom complained of his conduct. The other ladies you referred to, told me the same, and I confess it was this forbearing trait that induced me to take her again by the hand."

"Truly, mother, you make her out to be a heroine of no mean order. I do not know if I could be silent on such occasions."

"May you never be tried, my dear. But I have found more moral heroism amongst the poor in one back court, than is found in many a great battle. When I first met Catherine W—— she was in rags, her husband, when beating her, had reduced to tatters the only thing she possessed in the shape of a gown. Her children were as badly off; he had sold all he could get of their clothes to procure beer and gin. They were furnishing, for she had been without work nearly a week. He, as usual, had that very week spent nineteen shillings and sixpence of his wages, keeping the other sixteen for tobacco. She appeared to have given up all hope of future success, and seemed as if *now* regardless even of her children, but she had perseveringly fought an unequal battle for three years. Surely a woman of this stamp is worthy of being helped in order that she may help herself. It is because there are thousands of such cases, as hard and trying as noble and heroic, that I have resolved to continue to visit as long as I can walk. In all doubtful cases my motto has been, 'where there is room for a supposition, support the best.'

Such cases prove that there are sufferings deeper than those generally seen or contemplated, even by the kind-hearted, who really wish the people well, and certainly they give "a reason why" there ought to be more knowledge, more sympathy, more charity, more perseverance on the part of the friends of the suffering poor, especially towards the sisterhood.

Not only those who know not the bliss of doing good, but also by some disappointed labourers, are the words repeated, "It is no use." The truth is, amid all the efforts to educate and elevate the masses, there is cause for lamentation, as well as occasion for rejoicing. Earnest souls are active, and a great, a good work is being done, yet ignorance and vice, poverty and wretchedness everywhere meet the eye of the observer. Why are the fruits of such noble and enabling efforts not more abundant? Many reasons may be shown, but none better than that given by the lady whose experience we have just quoted, namely: "There are deeper wrongs than those generally seen or contemplated, even by the kind-hearted, who really wish the people well." And let us bear in mind that this is particularly the case in regard to those women for whom an interest is being manifested by their more fortunate brothers and sisters, the setting forth a necessity for more knowledge, more sympathy, more charity, more perseverance, more *Godlike effort* on the part of all who wish to see women elevated to her proper sphere.

WOMAN'S LIFE AT HOME.*



SURELY that of all others may be, and generally is, the happiest and holiest. True, it is a very busy one. She is required in half a dozen places at once; her nimble feet have to run up stairs to see that the beds are properly turned and shaken, down again to see that the meat is put before the fire at

the right time, and that the rice pudding doesn't burn; into this room to draw down the blind, so that the sun shouldn't spoil the furniture; into the other to mend and air the shirts, for "husband takes cold so soon, and he's very particular about his food"; and you can see by the tender smile upon her lips that she loves him none the less for that. Drudgery? She doesn't believe in it, if she is a true woman. She may get weary, and vexed, and all that; but she does it for her dear ones, and every act is a love-token. Then she has higher and yet more congenial work to do. There are head-aches and heart-aches to cure; and her cool, tender hand is ever ready. There are disappointments, cares and fears to be coaxed away; gentle words of advice, caution, and admonition to be spoken; cheering sentences of hope to be whispered. And sometimes, when the smiter's hand has fallen heavily, and the strong frame of her husband well-nigh sinks beneath it, then her fragile arms are thrown around him to support; then is she stronger, even than he, to suffer and endure. And when he can only groan in despair, her voice arises to the throne of the Eternal Father in passionate pleading, importunate and prevailing as his who once said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me!"

If she be a mother, still higher, nobler is her mission. If to the weak hands is entrusted the task of rearing the young immortals, for service here, and glory hereafter; if the gem be given to her to polish which shall one day sparkle in the crown of the Saviour, let her walk softly, for angels might envy her high vocation, and the Almighty looks to see how she is nursing the child for him. Full to overflowing is that heart of hers, when the little panting lips first call her mother; and in true devotion bows she her head when the little one prays for her.

Yes, a happy, solemn life is that of the home-sheltered woman. Afar off she hears the din of the great world without, but in her spirit there is deep, tender peace. She envies not those of her sex who seek their happiness in fame, or so-called pleasure. With clasped hands and full eyes she thanks the Good Shepherd who has led her into such green pastures. And when any talk of the "equality of the sexes," "woman's rights," and all the other absurdities, her thoughts are something like these excellent lines—

The rights of woman! What are they?
The right to labour and to pray;
The right to succour in distress,
The right, when others curse, to bless;
The right to lead the soul to God,
Along the path the Saviour trod.

A WORD FROM BESSY;

OR, THE TURNING POINT OF A LIFE.

THE interesting narrative bearing the above title is one of two-and-twenty charming stories, forming a neatly printed and prettily illustrated volume. It is a book that should have a wide circulation, and is certain to find favour wherever it appears. The story of Bessy shows the influence which a word in season may effect, and how "bread thus cast upon the waters" appears "after many days."

"It was a calm frosty evening in the end of October. The crescent moon was high above the tall chimneys and church spires of Birmingham, though but faintly

seen through the dense smoke which always overhangs that town of many forges. But forge and workshop were fast closing for the night; weary mechanics were pouring along the gas-lighted streets, to their respective homes or haunts in the lower part of the old town, while in the upper and fashionable wards, ridges, with curled and tufted heads in high relief inside, and groups whose grey dresses peeped from under wrapings which had just commenced for that season in Birmingham. The din of the great thoroughfares came softened by distance to a small suburban street, which ran almost into the fields. Quiet people, who kept little gardens, lived there; it had two shops, and gin was sold in one of them. But, though every house was lighted, there was nobody just in the street, but a solitary man and the family group of the Jenkinson. The latter consisted of Mrs. Jenkinson, a tall matronly lady, who walked with much precision, in a black satin gown and fawn shawl; her eldest daughter, a girl of eighteen, but rather stiff-looking, with the latest winter fashions of mantilla and bonnet on; and her twin little girls, Mary and Anna, who were just turned of nine, and tripped along in fine hats and peluchs behind. Mrs. Jenkinson left them entirely to the guardianship of their so-called governess Bessy, and her brother Jack,

ment, as if lost in moody thought, till approaching the gin-shop which chanced to be on the side of the street he turned as if in a heated, and then, with a resolute movement, hurried in. It was but for a moment when the man came as quickly back; but again he paused at the door, and once more turned away, yet his walk had a wavering in it, and Bessey saw him look back.

"Speak to him, Jack," said she, half drawing her brother across the narrow street; "ask him not to go in."

"He'll be angry, sister, and scold us," said Jack.

"Ay, but it might save him, and with God's help, I'll do it myself," said Bessey. "Oh, sir," she continued, as they now met the stranger full in the clear gas-light, "don't go in. We had a father once, and he went into stops like that—"

"What do you say, girl?" said the stranger, looking up with a sharp and handsome face, which, in spite of his assumed surprise, plainly indicated that Bessey's words had been perfectly understood. "What do you say to me about your father?"

"That he went into stops like this, sir, and he is dead," said Bessey, with an earnestness which her brother thought almost bold; "and for all we learned by—that though I'm a poor girl, and we are both strangers—my brother and I take upon us to remind you this night of the old prayer, 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.'

"And what service might the remembrance of him do for me, my good girl?" said the stranger, moving along with them, like one whose mind had found some temporary diversion. "One might go to worse places than a gin-shop, you know."

"Ah, sir," said Bessey, "the use of that prayer might help one to go to better places."

"Ay, girl, if one's fortunes would let him," said the stranger; "but where's the good in striving against wind and tide?"

"And where's he going to go in?" asked by this time got over his constitutional fear of scolding, though he perceived that the stranger had a manner and bearing considerably above their class, and was some years older than either himself or Bessey.

"If one finds comfort in it, why shouldn't one go to a gin-shop or anywhere else, when things are as bad with him as they can be?" said the stranger, suddenly.

"Oh, sir," said Bessey, "it's a strange state that can't be made better or worse, if one sets his heart to it; and surely the gin-shop is not the best way. Besides, you know God has grace for us all, and we are warned not to be wavy in our ways."

"Good-night, my girl," said the stranger, wringing her hand. "I'll go straight home."

We find the Jenkinson family, who have descended to take Bessy as a sort of drudge—governess, maid, what-not—feels itself a little scandalized at Bessey's imprudence. These Jenkinsons are business people, who have made some money, and are working hard at gentility. Bessy and Jack are orphans, she, as we have seen, factotum of the Jenkinson's, he in the employ of Jones—a mighty grandee of trade, and inventor of the "Coburg button." After some time we find Jack going into business; a neat shop is taken, and Bessey, relieved by Jenkinson's control, looks after the shop, and is very happy. But Jack is impressed with the idea that he has a "soul above buttons," and the Jenkinsons suggest that he should go into a larger way of business—take bigger premises, give up his situation, obtain stock on credit, and rise to be something great. So Jack—all unwilling of his poor little sister's protest—runs into debt—gallops into it—a sweeps away the trinkets of her making, that used to sell, and loads his counter and cases with articles that nobody will buy. He entertains the idea of marrying Miss Elizabeth Jones; and, perhaps, becoming mayor of the town, who knows? But it comes to pass that the great expectations of the Jenkinsons, who have been building castles in the air, on the assumption that Jones, of the "Coburg button," will leave them all his money, are grievously disappointed. Jones dies without a will, and a brother, whom nobody had heard of, but as a ne'er-do-well, claims everything, they hide their disappointment in as much privacy as possible. Seldom is it that Jack can obtain an interview with Elizabeth, who in point of fact, is courted by somebody else. Troubles come thick and fast on Jack and his sister. There are debts unpaid and bills discounted, and no trade. And ruin marching steadily towards them, Jack is hopeless—Bessey hopeful in God. One evening Bessey, much dispirited, is surprised by the entrance



who brought up the rear arm-in-arm, at a respectful distance. They were Jenkinsons too, and had a distant relationship with the greater family, which poverty rendered still more remote for the one who wore the dress of an ordinary mechanic, and the other a well-worn cloak and a coarse straw bonnet. Their talk was nevertheless earnest and hopeful.

"I'll soon have the money gathered," said Jack, his tone rising unconsciously; "then we'll have a house and shop of our own, and you and I will never part, Bessey."

"Here he stopped, for Bessey's glance directed his attention to the solitary man on the opposite side of the street. He had the figure and step of youth at his air was worn and reckless, his hair was had a scuffed, shabby look—they had never seemed as if they had fallen together; and his face was almost hidden by an old and crazy hat, drawn down as it seemed for the purpose of concealment.

Bessey had observed him pacing along like one who had no object in his goings; he looked to neither house nor passenger, but kept his eyes bent on the pave-

* Life's Sketches and Echoes from the Valley." By Marianne Farnham. "Handy and Knolly Words—Stories Illustrative of the Law of Kindness, the Power of Perseverance, and the Advantages of Little Helps."—Hogg and Sons.

of a stranger, who requests to see some pocket-books that are in the window.

"He took up one after another, asking its price, but looked all the while at her, and the girl could not help observing him. He had the manner and appearance of a gentleman, but the handsome face had traces of bygone strife and trial, though no whitening was yet on the dark hair. 'Perhaps you don't like the pocket-books, sir,' said Bessy, at length.

"'No, sir,' said the stranger; 'I will have a couple; but might I ask if you have lived long here?'

"'Not long, sir,' said Bessy. 'My brother has not taken the place above two years.'

"'Your brother?' said the stranger, speaking low. 'Was there a gin-shop here formerly, and did you ever speak to a man who hesitated at its door?'

"'Oh, yes,' said Bessy. 'But that is long ago, when I was a governess with the Jenkinsons. Perhaps it was held, but—'

"'I'm the man to whom you spoke,' interrupted the stranger, 'and I have come to thank you for saving me body and soul, that night, for your words made me think as I had never thought before, and things have went well with me since then.'

"'It was not I, but God, that did it, sir; and maybe He would do something for us too,' cried Bessy, in simplicity.'

"'Why, what evil has happened to you? Can I do anything? My name is Jones,' said the stranger.

"'Oh, sir,' said Bessy, as the tears filled her eyes, 'we can sell nothing, and everybody is dunning us.'

"'Here's my check-book. What's the amount of the debt?' was the stranger's ready answer.

"The last words, though spoken but a little louder than the first, sent a shudder through Jack's ear like a trumpet summons, and he rushed out in time for Bessy, who had flown with the news, to seize him in her arms, exclaiming, 'Brother, you won't have to close, or be called a swindler, for here's a gentleman who says he will lend us something to pay them all!'

There was long talking in the back parlour before Jack could be brought to comprehend that their visitor was indeed Mr. Jones, the son and heir of his former employer, and the haggard, shabby man to whom Bessy had spoken at the foot of the stairs.

Mr. Jenkins's remarks were such a terror to him. The contrast between that individual and the great manufacturer was almost beyond Jack's philosophy. Bessy understood him better, when he briefly explained, that, having made an unequal match

—a foolish one no doubt, as the world goes,' said Mr. Jones; 'but there are worse women than my poor Sally—the consequent loss of friends and fortune in his young and unstable years, the decided disquiet, natural, resulting from a difference of habits and education in his helpless mate, with the unadvised mind of young wife ill-suited to cope, had driven him to wild and intemperate courses for comfort. As pride and spirit both declined in that downward way, he had come to Birmingham, and temporarily established himself there in a wretched lodging, in hopes of seeing and extracting something from his father, when the brother and sister, in the midst of their own communings, saw him hesitate for a moment at the door of the gin-shop. The thorns had grown up, but not entirely checked the growth of his better days, and Bessy's simple speech fell upon them like a charm. It taught me what neither school nor college had done,' said he, 'to make the best of things as they were, and look above my own wisdom. I have had some strivings and much to neglect in life; but tell me the amount of your debt, for mine can never be paid with money.'

Before noon next day Jack was a joyful man, for all his creditors were paid in good bank paper, and the shop perfectly cleared of the fancy things, which the owner of a travelling bazaar bought at a reduction that, under other circumstances, would have made him groan; but Mr. Jones had advised him that his talents were quite unequal, and offered to make him foreman of his own department, fabricating the Royal Colours button. At the same time, the grateful capitalist secured the house to Bessy by a lease, which he purchased for her own and her brother's life, and requested her to fill the shop in her own fashion and at his expense, by way of present occupation and provision for future days.'



THE NIGHTLY VISIT.

THE GOOD WOMAN.

She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

Proverbs, chap. xxxi.

THE MOTHER'S CUSTOM.

THE numerous vivid pictures of motherly love which might be pourtrayed, could, if represented here, scarcely be surpassed by the one which follows, taken from a charming collection of biographies which the author has appropriately titled "Our Untitled Nobility."

These sketches comprise William Smith, Thomas Wagstaffe, Robert Raikes, the founder of Sunday Schools; David Nasmith, the founder of the City Mission; Henry Martyn, William Scoresby, the two Brunels, Marshall Hall, Thomas Dick, the Christian Philosopher; Henry Cort, and George Wilson, the Chemist.

Throughout the book—which is written in a thoroughly evangelical spirit—we notice some striking instances of female influence, but the most interesting is that of the mother of George Wilson.

The boys were happily blest with that best of blessings, a good mother, and they loved her dearly. It was their mother's custom to visit every night the cot of her children, and utter beside them the patriarchal benediction: 'The God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.' This was done so often and so long that George recollects it as one of the most hallowed remembrances of his infant years, and he once said to a friend that he used to lie awake with his eyes shut, in order that he might listen for the words of his mother's blessing."

The influence of his mother's affectionate prayers and beautiful example, were never lost upon George Wilson; they never are, they never can be lost. How pleasantly he reverts, again and again, to the memories of his childhood; and how intensely religious, and yet withal, how cheerful was the spirit of this man. His home had been sanctified by religion? "A happy home, where even heaviest afflictions come laden with odour from heaven, where even

Azael, angel of death, was regarded only as a messenger of light." He had to suffer much. When he was four-and-twenty his foot had to be amputated and he came from his chamber crippled for life; but the mother's prayer descended in blessing upon him. "That season," he used to say, "comes back to me as a very solemn one, yet like Jacob I halt as I walk, I trust that, like him, I came out of that awful wrestling with a blessing I never received before; and you know that if I was to preach my own funeral sermon, I should prefer to all texts 'It is better to enter halt into life than having two feet to be cast into hell.'"

The man was strongly devoted to science, but his mother had taught him to look higher than nature, to look to nature's God. After the amputation of which we have spoken, he prosecuted his labours with earnest zeal and undaunting determination, writing lectures, teaching classes, but his life was that of a cripple and an invalid—one long dying. In the cloudy scenes of his life, what pathetic interest attaches to the short letter to his mother, a wretched scrawl, written with his left hand, and bearing evidence of sharper agony:—"Dear Mother,

I keep better, no pain, no fever, your George. The only deception he ever practised was that of concealing from those whose affections were bound up in him his knowledge of the state of his health. He knew he was dying; but why should that fact darken the earth with a cloud, and banish the smile or crush the cheerful voice? "There are far worse things in the world than dying."

It was the mother of George Wilson who fitted him for struggle and endurance, who led his earliest thought to God, and taught him to lead a brave life—a beautiful life—of labour and devotion. And this has been the case in so many thousand instances, that mothers should take encouragement as they feel the weight of their obligations, and strive earnestly by prayer, and precept, and pattern, to sow the good seed in the virgin soil of youth.

THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN.

THE PRESENT AND FUTURE AVOCATIONS OF WOMEN.—NO. 1.

"The woman's cause is man's; they rise or sink together, dwarf'd or godlike, bound or free: If she be small, slight-natured, miserable, How shall men grow? But work no more alone. For woman is not undevelop'd man, But diverse: could we make her as the man, Sweet love were slain; his dearest bane is—Not like to like, but like in difference. Yet in the long years liker must they grow; The man be more of woman, she of man; He gain in sweetness and in moral height, Nor loose the wrestlings that throw the world. She, mental breadth, nor fail in childward care, Nor let the children be the tenderer mind; Till at the last she be equal to man, Like perfect music unto noble words; And so these twain, upon the skirts of time, Sit side by side, full summd' in all their powers, Dispensing harvest, sowing the to-be, Self-reverent each, and reverencing each, Distinct in individualities, But like each other, even as those who love. Then comes the stately Eden back to men; Then reign the world's great bridals, claste and calm, Then springs the crowning race of human-kind."

TENISON.

"THE right education of females is of the utmost importance to human life. There is nothing that is more desirable for the common good of all the world. For though women did not exactly on the trade and business of the world, yet as they are the mothers and mistresses of families, that have for some time the care and education of their children of both sexes, they are entrusted with that which is of the greatest consequence to human life. For as the health, or strength, or weakness of our bodies is very much owing to their methods of treating us when we are young, so the soundness or folly of our minds are not less owing to those tempers, and ways of thinking, which we eagerly received, from the love, tenderness, sympathy, and affection of our mothers. As we call our first language our mother-tongue, so we may justly call our first tempers our mother-tempers; and perhaps it may be found more easy to forget the language than to part entirely with those tempers which we learnt in the nursery. It is therefore much to be lamented that this sex, on whom so much depends, who have the first forming both of our bodies and our minds, are generally not only educated in pride, but in the silliest and most contemptible part of it."

LAW.

THE condition of many thousand women in our Isles is very painful and sad. Setting aside all who desire to avoid dependence upon others, there are a multitude whose heritage must be eventually, if not primarily, to labour for bread, and who, being surplus females, will never be married. The paths in life they have hitherto taken are restricted to a few hard-pressed roads, and these are overcrowded with an insufficient and scanty reward as the pilgrims go on, and nothing at the end.

The subject has been made the topic of much writing, yet it will take a long time to exhaust, and very little has been published of a practically useful nature. The supply of labour for female hands is a matter requiring the utmost precaution and care; and there are two evils to be guarded against, if not more; but say two, one being an interference with the labour of men, and the other cause of apprehension (already verified in numerous cases), that the introduction of female labour, if in competition with male, will lower the rate of wages, to the ultimate deterioration and irreparable injury, not only of the industrial classes, but of the whole community, in greater or less degree, manifesting itself by increased destitution, pauperism, and crime.

Earlier in the world's history, in those countries which may be designated as especially civilised, the population being then comparatively small to that of the present day, and there being no such excess of females over males, as there is now none if they were rightly distributed, while destitution, as a prominent feature in the social system, had no existence, as it unhealthily now has, there was no necessity for females occupying themselves with other than domestic employments. It must be admitted that the condition of women at home has undergone so great an alteration that a wider field of industrial operation has now become essential, and that the morality of society is seriously endangered until a sufficient provision of labour is found for them. Great caution, however, should be manifested in the substitution of wantmaking for mankind in various branches of labour, and such changes must be effected gradually. Many employments belong by right to the female sex, and no injustice

would result to the other sex by women being brought into their right places.

"The two principal occupations of women have been spinning, and sewing, embroidery, and flower-making. Woman has been both a spinner and a seamstress, and the two trades are destroyed by machinery. Spindles have suppressed the spinning-wheel, and the sewing-machine is fast suppressing the needles of Redditch. The want of demand for female labour, which has been for many years past wholly insufficient, and an evil ever increasing, must of necessity become a very serious feature in our social economy.

"They are the happiest of the sex, and will ever remain so, who can find a place for their activity in administering or helping to administer the affairs of a household. It may be safely asserted, in spite of the most enlightened remonstrance, not only that this occupation is more healthy and natural to a woman, but that it is in reality a broader field, calls forth more faculties, and exercises and disciplines them more perfectly than ninety-nine out of a hundred of the industrial avocations out of 'home.' But it must be admitted that there are many thousands of females who have not, nor may ever have, the opportunity of fulfilling the duties inseparable from a household, to whom the joys and sorrows which go hand in hand in every home, must, in the present constitution of our social system, be for ever unknown or unexperienced. To these a thoughtful solicitude is due, to provide, as far as may be, against the contingency of the weaker sex being driven to the wall in life's rough battle.

"Young women who desire to avoid idleness and dependence on a lot of labour without reward have a very hard prospect in this country—much harder than in other countries that might be named. In France thousands of women are shopkeepers and clerks. In Switzerland thousands are watchmakers, earning a subsistence quietly in their own houses. In the United States the local legislators make grants for the support of medical colleges, where women study medicine and its allied arts. Female physicians are established in several of the large towns of the Northern States, and good results are obtained.

"The process of emancipation is always the same. Some one or some few cannot for ever endure the reprobation; and individual effort bursts the bonds and opens the way for the many to follow. It is thus that every pursuit of which women are capable will in time be at their choice. One after another will do what they are capable of doing. Let them show, like the 'Blackwells' in America, their capacity, and it will not be possible for the whole world to keep them down. One of these great evils which young dressmakers have to endure is the length of time they are compelled to work; out-door workers averaging twelve hours daily, for the scanty pittance of from seven to nine shillings weekly, including their tea. But those who labour in doors are much worse off; they get no exercise, and are expected to be in the workshop from seven in the morning till ten o'clock at night, being scarcely allowed the relaxation of talking; and in the busy season it is often daylight before they retire to bed, too tired to sleep through the brief hours allowed them. There are too many hours exacted from females, who, though acknowledged as the weaker sex, are yet overtaxed to a degree that makes do not suffer from, and probably would not endure. Tea hours out of the twenty-four is surely long enough for women to toil, and their wages should not be less than twelve shillings—little enough to maintain them respectably. In cases of emergency, relays of fresh hands to accomplish extra work may always be obtained from the many girls who are disengaged. Ladies and their fellow-women have it in their power to counteract at least of these evils."—*Tad's Magazine.*

A lady writes:—"In these days of social reform, the scarcity of female employment has suggested the expediency of widening the sphere of woman's usefulness.

"Royalty approves the plan of opening new branches of industry to women; and philanthropy is busy at work devising a means; but alarm and indignation are expressed, that unwomanly trades should be proposed and adopted by a surplus female population, who happen to be dependent upon their own exertions and industry for a living. Says one deep thinker:—'When the women of a nation become its artisans, it is fast approaching the last stage of decadence. For every woman employed (he argues) one man is displaced, and the position of the sexes is henceforward inverted. Man from being the leader becomes the miserable committer for

miserable wages with a woman!' This lord of creation scorns woman as a rival in the shop and the factory, but will allow her to be his assistant, if necessary. Pity that the champion of his sex should not rather direct the efforts of his enlightenment to persuade man to keep to his legitimate occupation, and by so doing prevent the necessity for woman to trench on forbidden ground. Surely if it be unwomanly to adopt manly trades, it is equally unmanly to wrest from the weaker sex their lawful employments. Man's resources are infinite, however, it would seem; and he may with equal facility devote his energies to the construction of a 'Great Eastern,' or the introduction of a new pattern into the 'millinery saloon.' It might be thought that man, rejoicing in his strength, and conscious of his superiority, would despise an effeminate employment as unworthy his manhood; and that physical weakness only, or incompatibility, would compel a man to become a co-partner with a woman in the show-room or behind the counter. It seems, however, that muscular strength beyond woman's is needed to measure laces and unrroll ribbons, and that hands able to learn the art of war can most delicately handle costly trifles light as air, and can best display the fashions of the day.

"If a woman unsexes herself when she attempts to understand the secrets of mechanism, whether it be the delicate framework of a watch or the mysterious workings of a printing machine, surely man, who can 'make his life sublime,' strangely forgets his dignity when he makes it the business of a life-time to arrange the folds of a silken robe, or direct the position of an artificial flower?

"Woman's natural sphere is home; but it so happens that some have no place by the household hearth, no home—as is often the case when death steps in and takes the head of a family. Many have no help of man at all, and for these we claim the consideration of humanity. Whether hitherto tried branches of industry for female employment be successful, remains to be known; but were it not better that those employments which best befit woman be encouraged upon? Formerly many females maintained themselves by millinery and dressmaking, having respectable and important establishments of their own, and entirely by their own industry and perseverance acquiring at least a competency against old age. These employed many young persons, and held an honourable position in society; nor were their business transactions unimportant or discreditable. We could name good old firms, now no more, who, although bearing feminine apppellations, and worked by female energy and perseverance, ranked with the first warehouses in their cities in commercial importance.

"We meet more rarely now the 'West-end houses of business' conducted by ladies only. The substantial mansion, with its broad shining plate in front, and gilded letters glittering in the sunshine of the well-grown street, is silent to the ceaseless roll of carriages. In the season, and doors that were never shut by day now creak slowly on their hinges to a casual visitor. The cheerful hum of voices and the click of busy needles have ceased before silence and deserton. Free trade competition has 'turned the tide of affairs,' the best directed energy cannot contend against capital, and hence those who once flourished from their efforts have been necessitated to withdraw from the respective field of their labours, and to content themselves with a wretched pittance elsewhere."

THE LOVING TOILER.
A LIFE-PORTRAIT.

It is pleasant to know where virtue hath a lodg-ing—though it be ever so humble a one—even at the modest elevation of a second-floor, or front-attic. Sojourning with simple people and in the homeliest guise, she carries all her lovely and living attributes with her, however high she move up—and their brightness, in the same way, tracks her descent if circumstances, perchance, drive her downwards.

We have met her before now under both phases; and, for the matter of the second-floor, could point to one. She was one of those brave, self-sacrificing spirits, who often exist within the lowliest homes and daily offer up themselves for the saving of their needy households. How, in our love of hero-worship, we overlook such instances! seeking the beamed attribute in books—abroad, high up, afar-off—but never in the sanctuaries of lowly life, where the most heroic acts of all are daily perpetrated—the immolation of hunger and want, to the hunger and want of others.

"DIDN'T THINK."

"Raining, as I live!" said Mrs. Watson, in a disappointed tone, as she drew up the blinds of the bed-room window. "It's just my luck! I have waited over two weeks for that girl. She was to come this morning; and now it's pouring down in torrents, and the wind is fairly blowing a hurricane. What shall I do? The children are all in rags and tatters. Katey hasn't a dress fit to be seen."

"You are worrying yourself about nothing," interrupted Mr. Watson. "A little rain will not keep the girl away. She'll be here in good time."

"Don't you believe it?" returned Mrs. Watson. "I noticed her—a frail little body, that a breath would blow away. I was not going to engage her, but Mrs. Crosby said she was the best and fastest sewer she ever had, and fitted children's dresses beautifully. O dear! It's just my luck!"

"Hark!" said Mr. Watson. "Wasn't that the bell?"

A wild rush of wind and rain against the window filled their ears and obstructed the entrance of all other sounds for several moments. Presently there came a tap at the door.

"What is wanted?" asked the lady, as she partly opened and held the door ajar.

"Miss Percy has come."

"Oh! The dressmaker. Very well; take her upstairs, and say that I'll be with her directly."

"Frightened before you were hurt," said Mr. Watson, good humouredly.

"Better frightened than hurt," replied his wife, with returning cheerfulness. "Thank fortune, she's here, and I intend to make the most of her."

Mrs. Watson was right, when she spoke of Miss Percy as a frail little body. That word "frail" gives the true idea. She was small of stature and very slender; her face was thin and colourless. Her large brown eyes were bright, usually soft, and a little sad in their expression; but sometimes intense, and sometimes flashing.

It was in November. The storm had reduced the temperature to an uncomfortable coldness. Miss Percy's feet were wet, and some portions of her clothes dripping from the rain. She felt chilly when she came in. She stood by the fire in the hall, receiving its grateful warmth, while the servant went to announce her arrival; but the shiver had not died on her pale lips, nor grown quiet along her nerves, when the servant asked her to go upstairs, and she went up to the third story.

"This is the sewing-room," said the servant, as she opened the door, and Miss Percy went in. The air felt damp and cold, for one of the windows was partly raised. The servant pushed back the shutter, and closed the window. Then saying that Mrs. Watson would be there in a few minutes, left the room.

Miss Percy had scarcely laid aside her bonnet and cloak, when Mrs. Watson entered.

"Good morning," she said, in a cheerful tone. "I was afraid, when I saw it was raining, that you wouldn't come. I should have been much disappointed." Then, without waiting for a reply, or noticing that the pale young girl was wet and shivering, she took up an old dress that hung across a chair, and handing it to Miss Percy, said, "The first thing I want done is this ripped to pieces. It will make up sweetly for Kate. After breakfast you can fit the body."

The large bright eyes of Miss Percy rested for a few moments on the lady's face. But Mrs. Watson was too much absorbed in her own thoughts to notice them. On entering the room she had perceived a difference in temperature—the air struck coldly on her face. But hurried movements had given a quicker circulation to her blood, and prevented the chilliness from being further perceived. It did not for a moment occur to her that the room might be too cold for one to sit down in who had just come out of the rain, with wet feet and damp garments. In fact, she didn't think anything about her dressmaker, as a human being; only about her as an agent to serve—as a machine for the production of dresses, mantles, capes, and the like, for her children. We don't mean to intimate that Mrs. Watson was a cold-hearted or cruel woman; nothing of the kind. If she had clearly understood that Miss Percy's feet were wet, and her clothes damp, she would not only have insisted on her going down to the kitchen, but would have supplied her with dry stockings and shoes. But Mrs. Watson didn't think.

She went down stairs, and Miss Percy commenced

ripping the dress to pieces. The cloud-curtained sky made the room dark, and the shivering girl drew near the window in order to see clearly. Through every crevice came chilly currents of the searching east wind, striking upon her neck and face, and making every wave of blood that returned upon her heart still colder. There was no design in this; only, Mrs. Watson didn't think. And so, for the want of thought on the part of Mrs. Watson, her frail dressmaker was left to shiver, in wet garments, in a damp cold room.

A cup of hot coffee sent up from the breakfast-table would have been as a cordial, and given a sustaining warmth to Miss Percy. It is strange that this was not done. You call it culpable indifference or neglect. You pronounce the lady unkind. She was not, she didn't think that was all. If she had comprehended the case, the cup of coffee would have been sent to the shivering girl before any one at the table was served.

"Go and ask Miss Percy down to breakfast," said Mrs. Watson to a servant, after her husband and children had left the table.

Miss Percy came down. The coffee was lukewarm, and the toast cold. She drank a single cup, and forced herself to eat a few mouthfuls. Almost any kind-hearted, observant woman, you will say, would have noticed her pale shrunken face and blue lips; and her want of appetite—would have had, in consideration of the wet cold morning, and her walk in the rain, something hot and inviting for her breakfast. But Mrs. Watson had not considered; did not observe. She was absorbed in other matters; was pondering over the subject of her children's wardrobes, and counting over the various garments she was going to have made.

"I'll be with you presently," she said, as the girl, after finishing her slight meal, went out of the breakfast room.

Again, on entering the work-room, Mrs. Watson noticed a difference of temperature; but being fleshy and warm-blooded, the cooler sensation was agreeable. So she never thought of its being too cold for the poor dressmaker. In adjusting work, she touched her hand frequently; it was like marble; but, she didn't think. She talked with her, constantly, looking into her bright, glittering eyes, at her colourless cheeks, upon her blue lips—yet, she didn't think. After a couple of hours, two bright spots shone on Miss Percy's face; but Mrs. Watson didn't think, then, at intervals, she coughed slightly, and sometimes laid her hand against her side. Still, the absorbed lady didn't think. She was so much interested in the work that was in progress.

After mid-day Miss Percy was no longer cold. Fever had warmed her thoroughly.

"What rosy cheeks you have!" said little Kate, in admiration. "And how bright your eyes are! Then, in an undertone to her mother, 'Isn't she beautiful, ma?"

Mrs. Watson did not answer, didn't look up; didn't think!

Dinner time came. Miss Percy scarcely tasted food. Mrs. Watson noticed it, but didn't think. All the afternoon she was busy with her dressmaker; touched her hand frequently, as in the morning; it was hot now, but she didn't think. Looked into her face often; it was white before, but ruddy now; but still she didn't think.

Miss Percy would not stay to tea, but left as soon as the evening closed.

"You'll come in the morning," said Mrs. Watson, as the girl stood, slightly bent forward, with one hand pressed to her side.

"If I'm well enough," she answered.

"Oh, pray be well enough. Remember, I've waited for you for nearly three weeks."

Mrs. Watson spoke lightly, and without thought. There was not in her mind the slightest concern for the girl, so far as she might be affected by sickness or health; she was only concerned for her children's dresses. And yet, let us repeat, Mrs. Watson was naturally kind. She didn't think—that was the truth.

The next morning was clear and warm. One of those sweet bright days that come in the later autumn, after a deluge of rain. But Miss Percy did not appear. Mrs. Watson wondered and scolded. "There is no dependence on these people," she said fretfully. "It is as much as your life is worth to get them; and then you are not sure of them for a day at a time."

Ten, eleven, twelve o'clock came, and still Miss Percy had not appeared. Then Mrs. Watson changed her dress hastily, and went to see Mrs. Crosby, at

whose house she had engaged the dressmaker, in order to learn from her exactly where she lived. Mrs. Crosby did not smile as they met, but looked at her with an unrelaxed, almost severe face.

"That girl has not made her appearance this morning," said Mrs. Watson.

"Yes; she came yesterday and worked all day. But there is not a sign of her this morning."

"A circumstance not to be wondered at," replied Mrs. Crosby, speaking very seriously. "I have seen her to-day."

"You have! Where is she?"

"At home and in bed, where she will remain for a long time; perhaps she will never rise again."

"Oh dear me!" said Mrs. Watson. On the instant, Memory, that faithful recorder, whether we will or not, had presented certain facts in the previous day's experience, that smote her with accusation.

"One day in your house will tell her all that she can ever give," said Mrs. Crosby. "She went to you according to engagement, through a cold, driving storm, and arrived with soaked feet and under-garments wet almost to the knees. You did not offer a change of anything, not even a pair of dry stockings. You did not ask her to warm herself by your kitchen fire, but set her down to work in a cold room, into which no heat came all day. Oh, madam! I am not speaking to hurt or offend, but all this was a neglect on your side, and the consequences may prove fatal!"

Mrs. Watson stood confounded. She clasped her hands in the anguish of sudden conviction—shuddered and turned pale.

"That I should have done this!" she exclaimed.

"It is inconceivable," said Mrs. Crosby.

"I have but one excuse to offer—want of thought. It was not indifference, not inhumanity—but simple lack of thought. Oh, my friend, I would give worlds if this had not happened! How will it sound when the story gets abroad? I shall be despised and execrated."

"Think, rather," said her friend, "of the consequences to Miss Percy; and do all in your power to mitigate them. She is poor, dependent, sick; I might almost say, dying. Show your sorrow by giving her every attention that a mother would give a child. It will be the surest way to satisfy your own conscience; and the only way to turn aside that public opinion you appear so much to dread."

All that lay in her power was done for Miss Percy by Mrs. Watson; but it availed not to save the life whose foundations had been too surely undermined. Miss Percy never left her room again, and in a few months went down into the valley of the shadow of death.

Untiring, self-devoted, constant in ministrations was Mrs. Watson; thus atoning to the utmost in her power, for her thoughtless and unintentional wrong. But it is easier to set the elements of destruction in motion than to arrest the destroyer after his bonds are loosened.

SHE WAS A FORLORN LITTLE MAIDEN.

She was a forlorn little maiden
With never a mother or home;
And fate, from the nest she had made her,
Commanded her lonely to roam.
Ah, me! how her childish heart sickened,
And ah! how her childish tears flowed;
But fate never pitieth a weeper,
And sternly it pointed the road.
She rather had died than departed—
For all who best loved her were there,
And she was a motherless maiden
That needed thy pitying care.
Oh! desolate, friendless, forsaken,
And shelterless, helpless, forlorn,
She felt, as she moved among strangers,
Still wondering why she was born.
At last to her soul came a whisper,
That stilled all the pain of her breast—
He who kneweth the heart of the stranger
Had given her comfort and rest.
Now, strength more than human sustains her,
A fonder than mother's love cheers,
A better than earthly home waits her,
Away, then, with anguish and fears.
What, though all life's billows are foaming—
High raging around and before?
The storm and the wild winds but drive her
More near to the Peace-dwelling Shore.

Shall we call it nothing in the wearied mother, who toils at home or in the factory throughout the day, in order to provide her share of food and shelter for the helpless beings dependent on her—that with dimmed eyes and drooping hands, faint, exhausted, she lengthens out the hours of labour by abridging those of rest, in order to fulfil the duties of a tender parent, and careful housewife? Conceive her in the dull night, when husband and children have sought their repose, which she, wearier than either, still struggles with physical debility and nature's requisitions to forego. See her regulating the confusion that her daily occupation or absence occasions; moving with soft footstep from place to place, careful—e'en with senses half dulled, and eyelids that would seal themselves but for a devotion that combats the desire—for the quiet rest of the dreamers, for whom she offers up the remnant of strength which the task-work of the day has left her. Watch her making or mending the garments of her little ones, or repairing those of her helpmate; though her eyes wink and close, her fingers move mechanically. But the poor frame has but a woman's strength in it, and it droops; the needle falls from her hand; and at this moment she had wholly yielded, but that the old Dutch clock, whose round and stolid face has been staring at her with a sort of fixed regard throughout the evening, as on every other, utters its warning by way of remembrance, and awakes her by striking, Once!

She starts up, draws together the few half-living embers in the grate, trims the melancholy candle, strains wide open her poor, weak, aching eyes, and resumes with determination to finish, however wearisome it may be—the labour of love: is there no moral heroism here? no magnanimity in over-tasking toil, and sacrificing health and strength to duty and affection? Surely virtue holds her own in hearts capable of such devotion; no world looking to bequeath its plaudits, or encourage with its frosty adulation. While those for whom it is endured too often receive it as a mere matter of course, careless or unconscious of more than ordinary excellence in the sacrifice; for all honour to humanity in humble places, such examples are by no means rare.

C. W.

SONGS OF HOME.—No. 1.

THE HAPPY WIFE'S EVENING SONG.

TUNE.—"The Meeting of the Waters."

Touch lowly my cottage and frugal its fare,
Affection and truth and devotion are there;
And when evening arrives, and the day's toil is o'er,
Then my husband comes home and I bar up the door.

Then my husband comes home, &c.

He goes to the bed where his little ones lie,
And I know the sweet light that they beans in his eye,
And he turns to his supper, what'er it may be,
With a kindness of heart that is heaven to me!

With a kindness of heart, &c.

I love him too well to repine at my fate—
Frugality still keeps the bun from our gate—
And I hope that his children may rise to repay
The toils and the sorrows that wear him away.

The toils and the sorrows, &c.

Oh, zealous and holy and pure are thy youth!
May they bear from my lips only kindness and truth!
And, when Mercy's mild messenger bears me from life,
Leave my memory dear as a mother and wife.

Leave my memory dear, &c.

M. L. G.

DECEPTION.—All deception in the course of life, is indeed nothing else but a lie reduced to practice, and falsehood passing from words into things.—South.

FEMALE OCCUPATIONS

IN THE

LONDON METROPOLITAN DIVISION.

(From the Census taken in 1861; Tables just published.)

PROFESSIONAL	*19,068
COMMERCIAL	*6,939
AGRICULTURAL	*2,672
INDUSTRIAL	231,885
DOMESTIC	1,184,793
INDEFINITE AND NON-PRODUCTIVE	31,847

* These numbers have greatly increased since the census.

FRIENDLY COUNSEL.—No. 1.

ADDRESSED TO

FEMALE HANDICRAFT WORKERS.

There is a large class of British Workwomen who are daily occupied in workshops, and concerning whom and whose trials and temptations, very little is generally known. We are not speaking of those who work at west-end milliners and dressmakers, and who reside in the establishment, where the work is carried on, but of day labourers: bookbinders, artificial flower makers, cloak makers, sewing machine workers, and others employed in similar ways; the work which these women—most of them young women—are called upon to perform, while it is not heavily laborious, is incessant and exacting, the company into which they are often thrown is that least calculated to develop or to foster habits of innocence and virtue, they are exposed to many small hardships and to many snubs: to this class, therefore, a few words of friendly counsel and encouragement may be appropriately addressed; any position is honourable so long as it is honourably sustained; character and conduct, not birth and station, bestow the highest and the truest honour. Let every workwoman be true to herself, faithful to God, and she shall in no wise lose her reward.

DUTY TO EMPLOYERS.

BE PUNCTUAL.—Where large numbers of hands are employed even two minutes loss on each is something considerable. Sixty times two is one hundred and twenty—that is two hours good work in the course of the day—twelve hours in the week, six hundred and twenty-four hours in the year, fifty-two working days, through only being two minutes late in the morning.

BE ECONOMICAL.—There is in most large establishments a great amount of waste, both in time and property. Be not of those who, by wilfulness or negligence, waste either the one or the other. Whatever is entrusted to you employ to the best advantage, as though it were your own.

BE ATTENTIVE.—Nothing can be well done that is not done with attention; whether it be sewing a seam, or folding a sheet of paper, it is necessary to be careful. There are some good workwomen who might rise to places of command, but who fail through want of attention. Fix your whole attention upon your work, and do it to the best of your ability.

BE OBLIGING.—It is always easy to find fault, to refuse to do a good turn, to render service agreed upon and *ad nōmō*: but harsh and rigid people of this kind never find favour. If we would have friends we must shew ourselves friendly. If we would have the good word of our employer, or of those who are set over us, we must show our willingness to oblige; in all these things we should remember that we are not only serving man but God. Read 1 Peter ii, 18.

DUTY TO COMPANIONS.

BE COURTEOUS. You have to mingle with the rude and vulgar, and are sadly tempted sometimes to resent offensive behaviour by a sharp answer. Do not yield to such a temptation. Never let rudeness ruffle you, nor evil communications corrupt your good manners.

BE AN EXAMPLE.—It is astonishing what even one individual can effect by example. It is related that a stranger entering a village church was struck by the harsh discord of the music, when suddenly he heard a clear voice singing in perfect tune and time, and gradually the other voices blended with that one, and before the hymn was finished all were in perfect unison. Do you set an example of punctuality, courtesy, order, forbearance, and good must follow.

BE CAUTIOUS.—Never join in scandalizing any absent person, nor repeat any story you may have heard to the discredit of another; never ridicule a companion, and never allow yourself to utter, nor to acquiesce in, anything that may pain the feelings of an associate.

BE LOYAL.—We mean by this be true to your employer in all respects, and never join in any scandal about the establishment, nor in any cabal against its proprietors. Read Prov. xiii, 20.

ASSISTANCE TO WOMEN.—To aid a woman in distress was deemed in the old days of chivalry the chiefest honour of the bravest knight: it is assuredly no less an honour now for wise and generous men to aid the whole sex to a better and nobler life, and to the developing more perfectly, because more fully and freely, that Womanhood which God has also made in His own image—a divine and holy thing.—Frances Cobbe.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

* * * We propose devoting a portion of our space to supplying information in answer to questions submitted by Correspondents. We do not undertake to reply to all who write, but we promise an answer in every case where the question is of general importance. If Jenny wishes to know which is the "engaged finger," what is the colour of her hair, and what we think of her matrimonial prospects, we beg distinctly to state that no response will be given; trivial questions should never be addressed to the "BRITISH WORKWOMAN," but on all subjects of real interest and importance full and accurate information will be given. The enquiries already submitted by Correspondents justify us, we believe, in the course we have adopted, especially as we cannot undertake to reply to any general communication through the post. The observance of the following Rules is requested—1. Be brief. 2. Be pointed. 3. Avoid profanity, plunge at once into your subject, like a swimmer in cold water. 4. If you write a sentence that you think particularly fine, draw your pen through it. 5. Conclude. Make sure that you really have an idea, and then record it in the simplest possible terms. All avoid high-flown language. The plainest Anglo-Saxon words are the best. 7. Make your sentences short. 8. Write legibly, and only on one side of the paper.

ONE WHO WISHES SUCCESS.—The "BRITISH WORKWOMAN" will be large enough. The design of the Work is fully stated on page 2, now as it is to be done, the ground we tread is untrdden, disengagement is not initiation.

AN INTENDING IMMIGRANT.—We will occasionally offer hints to immigrants, especially to America, concerning the selection of colonial agents, who have, very naturally, a particular bias for their own special colony.

BEST FRIENDS.—A letter in a fortune-telling wise ("a" & "g," &c., &c., which is of great deal), is no doubt extremely preposterous naming the female portion of the industrial classes; and we shall take occasion to point out its danger and its gaudy tendencies. But the higher and nobler the soul, the more it will be inclined to look into a "magical crystal," not to count its ornaments, fancy-trimmed and jewelled, shew the fashional follies of the day, as we know them to be; the poor are more prone to blame than the rich in the matter. Best Friends have all your woes, will all comfort them, and authorise them to bequeath your happiness to others. May your best friends be your best friends, make yourself their companion, sympathiser, and confidante, and keep all the time the veins of your heart open to receive the love and help of your best friends.

SIR.—I am a poor blind reader, and when I saw your publication announced my heart leaped with joy, and I said that at last there was a hand abroad to stretch forth to help me in my efforts to reclaim myself. Please to send me the name of the blind teacher you mention. Oh! pray that the Lord will help you, and prosper your undertaking, and direct your mind aright in carrying out the objects you mentioned in your prospectus. May God's blessing rest upon you, and your children as much as you please; make yourself their companion, sympathiser, and confidante, and keep all the time the veins of your heart open to receive the love and help of your best friends.

A POOR BLIND READER.—A British Working Man.—We thank you for your communication, which we will forward to our earliest convenience.

BOOK REVIEWS.—"MISERABLE WOMEN, OR, HERESIES OF MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE." Edited by the REV. JOHN CUMMING, D.D.—"NOTABLE WOMEN." By ELLEN C. CLATTON. (Dent and Son.)—"PILGRIM'S PROGRESS" (Illustrated). Vols I and 2. (Book Society.)

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2nd. By purchasing for distribution (free or otherwise, according to circumstances), and thereby promoting the sale of the work in the neighbourhood.

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* * * As it is desirable that Gratuatory distribution of this Work should be made among the very poor, subscribers in aid (which will be duly acknowledged) and solicited. Orders payable to RICHARD WILLCOX, "British Workwoman" Office, 335, Strand, W. C., to whom all communications for the Editor are requested to be sent Post Free.